


April 28, 1986

TO: File 
FROM: R. Harden, Reclamation Engineer
RE: Escalante Silver Mine, ACT/021/004, Iron County, Utah

On April 8, 1986, the Escalante Mine was visited by S. Linner, J. Leatherwood, L. Kunzler, D. Cline, R. Harden, D. Darby, and R. Summers. The site visit and information given to the Division at the site was from Mr. Ike Hunt, with Hecla Mining Company.

Field investigation of the site by the "B" Team was in preparation for update and approval of the operations mining and reclamation plan.

Site investigation covered the following items:

1. Location of the topsoil stockpiles on the site.
2. Investigation of the revegetation work on the disturbed areas resulting from the construction of the tailings pond.
3. Investigation of the exploration trenches and drill sites on the property and the timing for their reclamation.
4. Investigation into the bonding on the property and the possibility of requiring the revision of the surety amount.
5. General information as to the current production, anticipated life of the project, and potential future disturbances.
6. Location and construction of a new mine water sediment pond on the site.
7. Investigation as to the status of the waste dumps on the site and their inclusion into the reclamation plan and the bonding estimate.

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Reclamation work accomplished at the site appears to be satisfactory. The Division should revisit the site later this year for determination of vegetative cover requirements for bond release on some areas.

Reclamation work is also planned for much of the exploration trenches and drill sites on the property. A visit to the site in conjunction with the above should show the suitability of the general earthwork and grading of these sites. Depending on the timing of the visit, the Division may also be able to view or inspect seeding and mulching application at that time.

Escalante currently has an irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of \$119,574.00, dated September 13, 1985 from Sunwest Bank of Albuquerque, no. ANB0851. The bond estimate for the operation was accomplished in 1980 by the Division with inflation factored into the bond for 5 years. The Division needs to update the reclamation plan and the reclamation cost estimate to determine sufficient surety for the operation.

The installation of a new sediment pond for the mine discharge water was one week old at the time of the visit. No outlet structure for the impoundment has been made as the water in the pond has not yet reached a level requiring such a structure. The pond construction is incised into the area with the cut material being used to eventually impound water above the natural grade. Incised slopes of the pond in bank material are close to 1:1 while the fill embankments are at approximately 1.5:1. The pond appears stable but will require some contemporaneous reclamation to maintain the side slopes of the pond. Inflow into the pond is estimated to average approximately 200 gpm as estimated by the operator.

A possibility of a change in the post mining land use and reclamation of the mine dewatering canals was also discussed. The west canal is concurrently used as flood control for properties to the south of the operation. The State may wish to retain this canal for flood control upon cessation of the mining operations.

Revisions in the operation plan warrant the re-evaluation of the bonding amount for the operation. Items such as the now large waste dump on the site, additional well and exploration drill sites, etc. will have to be incorporated into the bond estimate.

cc: S. Linner

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